



Georgia courts Journal

A Publication of the Judicial Council of Georgia

Judicial Council

page 2

October 2009

Carroll County Child
Support Courtpg 1

Judicial Council Notespg 2

From the Board of
Court Reportingpg 2

Georgia Hosts National
Conferencespg 3

Hunstein Leads High Court . .pg 4

People & Placespg 6

Marla S. Moore Named
AOC Directorpg 8



The background of the entire page is a low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a grand classical building. The image is heavily faded and tinted with a warm, light orange or beige color. It features several tall, fluted columns supporting a heavy entablature. The perspective creates a sense of height and grandeur, with the columns receding into the distance.

Georgia Courts Journal

Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, SW, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334

Carol W. Hunstein

Chief Justice

Marla S. Moore

Director

Courts Journal Staff

Billie Bolton

*Assistant Director for
Communications*

Ashley G. Stollar

Graphic Designer

Program Highlight:

Carroll Co. Child Support Problem-Solving Court

An Interview with Judge John Simpson, Coweta Judicial Circuit

At the beginning of court in late May 2009, Superior Court Judge John Simpson called three men to the bench who had a history of not paying their child support obligations. The three men had recently found jobs and were participating in the newly-established Child Support Problem-Solving Court in Carroll County. Most importantly, these men had begun paying some of their child support obligation and arrearages. Judge Simpson said, "Normally, I am not a fan of applause in the courtroom, but could those sitting in the courtroom give these men a round of applause?"

Everyone in the courtroom that morning applauded, especially Judge Simpson. Following that court session, Judge Simpson met with Ms. Jill Radwin, Staff Attorney to the Child Support Commission, to discuss his involvement and motivation in establishing this pilot site, the Child Support Problem-Solving Court in Carroll County.

Ms. Radwin: Judge Simpson, what was your inspiration for establishing a Child Support Problem Solving Court here in Carroll County?

Judge Simpson: After being involved last year in drug court, I got the idea of taking this same problem-solving court model and applying it to the issue of child support. As with most of the judges in the state who hear child support cases involving the Office of Child Support Services, (the state's child support enforcement agency), the docket is always crowded and often,



Judge John Simpson

the judge sees the same faces over and over again. I asked the Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) if they would be interested in establishing this specialty court with me. The timing could not be better because OCSS was looking for a court to serve as a pilot with this very same concept. OCSS had already been in discussion with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to provide assistance to the pilot court. The AOC had expertise in establishing drug, DUI and mental health courts. The AOC agreed and became a stakeholder here with the responsibility of facilitating an evaluation of the court.

Ms. Radwin: How did you come to associate the problem-solving court model with the issue of unpaid child support?

Judge Simpson: I worked for a year with the Carroll County Drug Court so this caused me to think about child support in the same light. Carroll County was one of the

first drug court programs in the state. It has a very successful drug court with a very knowledgeable director and I learned a lot from the drug court team.

I also had the opportunity to attend a National Judicial College program in Reno, Nev., where I was able to observe a drug court in an urban setting. It is interesting to see the different styles that judges use. I mean, drug courts are very similar across the country; but it is interesting to see the different styles that judges use in drug court.

Ms. Radwin: How many participants do you plan to have in the program during this first year of its operation?

Ms. Judge Simpson: We want to have 30 participants. Currently we have 19 so we will be expanding to have 30 within the year.

Ms. Radwin: Any perceived successes at this early date?

Judge Simpson: Yes; I think that today (May 30), out of 19 individuals that are currently in the program, we have 12 of them working and paying child support. This was such a chronic group of non-payers when we started. This is the type of group who would sit in a jail for the 100-day period and pay nothing, so I think this is good initial success. ✍

This article is adapted from the Family Law Review, a publication of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Georgia, with permission. For more information on Child Support issues, contact Ms. Radwin at 404-463-1849.

Judicial Council Notes

New Members

- By Order of the Supreme Court of Georgia on April 13, 2009, the President of the Council of Municipal Court Judges became a voting member of the Judicial Council of Georgia. Since 2007 the president of the council has been an ex-officio member of the Judicial Council.

- Chief Justice Hunstein welcomed new members at the July 22 meeting:

Judge John J. Ellington

Court of Appeals;

Judge Kathlene Gosselin

Superior Court, Northeastern

Judicial Circuit;

Judge Cynthia J. Becker

Superior Court, Stone Mountain
Circuit;

Judge Bill Bass

State Court of Grady County;

Judge F. Bryant Henry

Juvenile Court, Lookout
Mountain Circuit;

Judge Lynwood Jordan,

Probate Court of Forsyth
County;

Judge Al Willis

Magistrate Court of Dooly
County;

Judge David Strickland

Municipal Court of Covington

Actions

- The Council adopted the following policy for Georgia courts regarding proper courtroom attire:

“Head coverings are prohibited from the courtroom except in cases where the covering is worn for medical or religious reasons. To the extent security requires a search of a person wearing a head covering for medical or religious reasons, the individual has the option of having the inspection performed by a same-sex officer in a private area. The individual is

allowed to put his or her own head covering back on after the inspection is complete.”

- **Clerk Guidelines for Assistance to Pro Se Litigants** – using the Council of Magistrate Court Judges’ guidelines as a reference, Chief Justice Hunstein recommended that each class of court develop a rule for clerks assisting pro se litigants. A motion was made and carried that the Uniform Rules Committee of each trial court be asked to consider such a rule. ✍

From the Board of Court Reporting

A revision of Article 9 of the Board’s Rules and Regulations was unanimously approved by the Judicial Council of Georgia on July 22, 2009. The revised rule reduces the revocation period and adds a mandatory penalty

Rules of the Board of Court Reporting and a list of currently suspended and revoked court reporters can be found on the Board of Court Reporting website,
www.georgiacourts.gov/agencies/bcr. ✍



On August 18, 2009, new members of the Board of Court Reporting were sworn-in by Presiding Justice George H. Carley, far right. From left, Mr. John K. Larkins, Jr., Ms. Tina Harris, Ms. Carol Glazier, Judge Philip Smith, and Ms. Janice Baker began two-year terms.

The Judicial Council of Georgia

will meet on

Friday, December 11, 2009

Twin Towers • Atlanta, GA
1:30 p.m.

Georgia Hosts National Conferences

National Association of Women Judges

Atlanta played host to the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) Mid-Year Conference on April 3-5, 2009. Judges from across the nation met at the Intercontinental Hotel in Buckhead to hear keynote speaker Judge Glenda Hatchett, former Chief Presiding Judge of the Fulton County Juvenile Court. Ms. Hatchett now hosts the syndicated television show, "Judge Hatchett."



Judge LaTia Martin (left), NAWJ President, Chief Justice Hunstein, and Senior Judge Phyllis Kravitch.

Senior Judge Phyllis Kravitch, Eleventh US Circuit Court of Appeals, was honored by the organization at a reception on April 3. Judge LaTia Martin, NAWJ President, and Chief Justice Carol W. Hunstein of Georgia announced that the NAWJ annual scholarship for female law students would be named in honor of Judge Kravitch, the first female superior court judge in Georgia.

National High School Mock Trial Championship Held in Atlanta

The Council of State Court Judges and the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia hosted the 26th Annual National High School Mock Trial Championships on May 6-10, 2009. The event was held at the Fulton County Courthouse in Atlanta. John Adams High School from South Bend, Indiana, won the Championship Round against Lakeville North High School from Lakeville, Minnesota.

5th Annual Drug Court Conference

The Judicial Council of Georgia Standing Committee on Drug Courts hosted its fifth annual conference at the Westin Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia. The 2009 conference, entitled "Sustaining Success, Saving Lives," was attended by more than 550 Drug, DUI, and Mental Health Court professionals including judges, case workers, service providers, and law enforcement officers from around the nation.



Judge Jeffrey Bagley

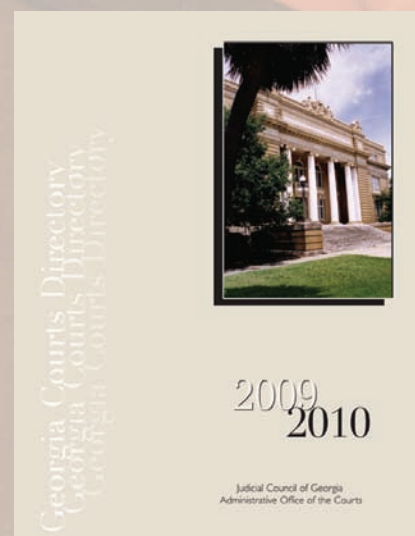
Judge Jeffrey Bagley, Superior Court of Forsyth County, opened the three-day conference. Retired Judge Billy J. Waters of Covington was recognized for his work in the juvenile treatment courts. His award was presented by Judge Juanita Stedman, Juvenile Court of Cobb County.

Atlanta to host CCPIO Annual Meeting in 2010

The Conference of Court Publication Information Officers, an organization for court PIOs in the United States and worldwide, has chosen Atlanta to host its 2010 annual conference. The three day conference will be held August 9-11, 2010.

The local planning committee includes co-chairs, Ms. Billie Bolton and Ms. Ashley G. Stollar of the Administrative Office of the Courts; Ms. Jane Hansen, Supreme Court of Georgia; and Mr. Don Plummer, Superior Court of Fulton County. ✍

2009-2010 Georgia Courts Directory Available



The 2009-2010 Georgia Courts Directory is now available. To order, visit www.georgiacourts.gov ✍

Chief Justice Hunstein Leads High Court

On July 1, 2009, Justice Carol W. Hunstein was sworn-in as the 28th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia. An assembly of the Justices

“I will continue to work hard to ensure that we maintain fair and impartial courts, dispense equal justice to everyone, and treat all those who enter our courts with dignity

The new Chief Justice was the first woman to serve as President of the Council of Superior Court Judges; she also chaired the Georgia Commission on Gender Bias in the Court System. As Chief Justice, she chairs the Judicial Council of Georgia and will continue to chair the Georgia Committee on Access and Fairness in the Courts.

DeKalb County Honors Chief

An oil portrait of Chief Justice Hunstein was unveiled at the DeKalb County Courthouse on September 25, 2009 to honor her years of service to the Superior Court bench of the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit. Presiding Justice George H. Carley, Judge Mark Anthony Scott, and Judge Daniel Coursey took part in the ceremony.

The portrait, painted by Decatur artist Nancy Wallace, will hang in the DeKalb County Courthouse. ✂



Chief Justice Hunstein with her portrait at the unveiling ceremony.



Chief Justice Carol W. Hunstein is sworn-in by former Gov. Zell Miller.

of the Supreme Court of Georgia, Judges of the Court of Appeals, trial court judges, legislators, family and friends gathered in the Supreme Court Courtroom to witness the event. Justice Hunstein was introduced by Atlanta attorney Ms. Linda Klein. The oath was administered by former Georgia Governor Zell Miller.

and respect,” the new Chief Justice said.

In 1984, Chief Justice Hunstein was elected as a superior court judge in the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit where she served until 1993 when Governor Miller elevated her to the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Three Chiefs and George T.



A retired Justice and three former Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of Georgia were on hand at the swearing-in of Justice David Nahmias on September 3, 2009. Left, former Chief Justices Norman Fletcher, Willis Hunt, and Leah Ward Sears are joined by former Justice George T. Smith.

Presiding Justice Carley Takes Oath

Justice George H. Carley, sworn-in as the new Presiding Justice, also took the oath of office from Governor Miller on July 1, 2009. Judge Steve Jones, Western Judicial Circuit, presented Justice Carley.

Of his new responsibilities, Presiding Justice Carley said, "I primarily see my role as one which insures that the procedures, customs and traditions of this court are carried out."

Presiding Justice Carley, a 1962 University of Georgia Law School graduate, was appointed to the Court



Presiding Justice George H. Carley is sworn-in.

of Appeals of Georgia in 1979 by Governor George Busbee. He served as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals 1989-1990. In 1993 he was

appointed by Governor Miller to the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Before becoming an appellate judge, Presiding Justice Carley served in the Georgia House of Representatives; he practiced law in Decatur, Georgia with the firm McCurdy and Candler.

Since 1998, Presiding Justice Carley has been a leader with the Georgia and National High School Mock Trial Competitions. ❧

Justice Nahmias Joins Supreme Court

On September 3, 2009, Justice David E. Nahmias became the newest member of the Supreme Court of Georgia, succeeding retired Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears. Justice Nahmias was introduced by his wife, Catherine M. O'Neil at the ceremony in the House Chambers. A large group of attorneys, judges and family members witnessed the event and attended a reception honoring Justice Nahmias that followed.

After practicing with the Washington, D.C. law firm of Hogan & Harts, Justice Nahmias joined the US Attorney's office in 1995. In 2004, Justice Nahmias was appointed US Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia by President George W. Bush.

Justice Nahmias earned his J.D. from Harvard Law School where he was an editor of the Harvard Law Review. ❧



Justice David E. Nahmias takes the oath of office from Gov. Sonny Perdue.

People, Places, & Events

In Memoriam

♣ **Judge Harold Lane, Sr.**, of Douglasville died May 6, 2009. Judge Lane was admitted to the Bar in 1963. He became a judge of the Magistrate Court of Douglas County in 1992.

♣ **Senior Judge John R. Harvey** of Pembroke died May 25, 2009. Judge Harvey, a UGA Law School graduate, was appointed to the superior court bench of the Atlantic Judicial Circuit in 1974.

♣ **Judge Charles E. Beasley** of Metter died June 11, 2009. Judge Beasley, elected as Probate Judge in Candler County in 1980, served in the office until his death.

♣ **Judge David J. Turner** of Manchester died August 30, 2009. Judge Turner served as Juvenile Court judge in Meriwether County for 35 years and as a municipal court judge in Manchester and other towns.

Appointments

♣ Former Clayton County Chief Magistrate **Judge Michael P. Baird** was sworn-in as a federal Immigration Judge in the Dallas, Texas on April 24, 2009. Judge Baird was Clayton County Chief Magistrate from 1997-2004 and judge of the Municipal Court of Jonesboro from 2004-2006. He is a graduate of the Georgia State University College of Law and served as an assistant professor in the university system of Georgia from 1998-2008.

♣ On July 17, 2009, Gov. Sonny Perdue appointed the following senior judges: **Judge William Ralph Hill** Senior Judge of the Superior Courts and **Judge Christine Burch** and **Judge Dianne M. Walker** Senior Judges of the Probate Courts.

♣ On August 4, 2009, Gov. Sonny Perdue appointed former Cobb County Juvenile Court **Judge Rex R. Ruff** Senior Judge of the Courts of Georgia.

♣ **Mr. Tracy J. BeMent** of Athens has been named District Court Administrator for the 10th Judicial Administrative District. He fills the vacancy created by the retirement of **Mr. Tom Gunnels**. Mr. BeMent previously served as court administrator for the superior, state, magistrate, and municipal courts of Clarke County. The office for the 10th JAD will be in Athens.

Nomination

♣ President Barack Obama has nominated **Judge Beverly B. Martin**, US District Court, Northern District of Georgia, to fill the vacancy on the Eleventh US Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Martin replaces **Judge R. Lanier Anderson**. The US Senate has confirmed the appointment.



Judge Beverly B. Martin

Elections

♣ On April 14, 2009, **Judge Rooney Bowen** was elected Probate Judge of Dooly County in a special run-off election. The vacancy was created by the retirement of **Judge Dewayne Forehand** in September 2008.

♣ **Judge Asholyn Powell Lampp** was elected Probate Judge of Jefferson County in a special run-off election held July 14, 2009. The election was held to fill the seat left vacant by the death of **Judge Quillian L. Bryant** in March.

♣ **Judge Tony Thompson** was elected Probate Judge of Candler County's in a special election on October 13, 2009. He will fill the un-expired term of **Judge Charles Beasley** who died in June.

Retirement

♣ **Judge Ruby K. Sirmans**, Probate Court of Lowndes County, retired August 1, 2009, after serving in the probate office a total of 48 years. She served as judge for 18 years. **Chief Clerk Terri Adams** has been sworn-in as acting probate judge to fill the vacancy.

Honors

♣ **Judge Barbara H. Caldwell**, Magistrate Court of Douglas County, was recognized for her years of service by the City of Douglasville February 19, 2009, "Judge Barbara Caldwell Day." Judge Caldwell has served as a magistrate since her appointment in 1984.

People, Places, & Events cont.

♣ On March 31, 2009, the Henry County Judicial Center in McDonough was dedicated to **Judge A.J. “Buddy” Welch**, Juvenile Court of Henry County. Judge Welch has served as Juvenile Court Judge since 1975. Justice P. Harris Hines, Supreme Court of Georgia, gave the dedication address; Chief Judge Arch McGarity and Judge Wade Crumbley spoke at the event.

♣ A portrait of **Senior Judge H. Arthur McLane** was unveiled on May 7, 2009, by the Valdosta Bar Association to honor the career of the long-time jurist. Judge McLane served

as superior court judge in the Southern Judicial Circuit for 25 years before his retirement on December 31, 2008.

DeKalb Judges Honored

♣ **Judge Gregory A. Adams**, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit, received the 2009 Georgia State University Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Community Service Award on May 9, 2009. Judge Adams is a 1981 graduate of Georgia State and served as Chief Judge of the DeKalb Juvenile Court before his election to the superior court bench.

♣ On May 16, 2009, **Judge Al Wong**, State Court of DeKalb County, was honored by John Marshall Law School with its Alumnus of the Year Award. A native of Hong Kong, he is the only Asian Pacific American to be elected judge in the Southeast. Judge Wong is a 1976 graduate of John Marshall Law School.

♣ **Judge Winston Bethel**, Chief Magistrate of DeKalb County, received a Faculty Appreciation Award from the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education for his work in the 2009 online course for Georgia judges titled “Jail-Diversion—Mental Health Court” Judge Bethel moderated discussions during the 4 week class which was held April 6-May 1, 2009. ❧

In Memoriam: Judge Sanford Jones Fulton County Juvenile Court

Long-time Fulton County Juvenile Court Judge Sanford Jones died May 15, 2009, attempting an emergency landing of his Beechcraft Bonanza aircraft in rural Alabama. One passenger, Mr. Alexander Medina, also died in the accident; two other teen-age passengers survived with minor injuries.

A tireless advocate for troubled children, Judge Jones was a father, grandfather, farmer, a man of faith, and a friend to many, both inside the court system and around the state of Georgia. His funeral, at New Hope Baptist Church in Fayetteville, was crowded with those who came to pay tribute to a beloved friend, known to all as Sammy.

Judge Jones began his career with the Fulton County courts in 1977 following graduation from the Woodrow Wilson College of Law in Atlanta. He served as court administrator first for the State Court of Fulton County and later the Superior Court of the Atlanta Judicial Circuit. He was appointed judge of the Fulton County Juvenile Court in 1991 and was serving as judge at the time of his death.

A fund has been created to have a memorial portrait commissioned. Contributions can be made to the Juvenile Justice Fund, Romae T. Powell Justice Center, 395 Pryor Street, Atlanta, GA 30312. ❧

New Inmate Forms Available On-Line

On April 9, 2009 the Supreme Court of Georgia approved updated forms to be used by inmates of correctional institutions.

According to OCGA §9-10-14(b), clerks shall not accept for filing any action by an inmate against the state, local government, any agency, or officer of state or local government unless the legal matter is legibly written on forms promulgated by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

The updated forms are available at www.georgiacourts.org/forms.html#inmate ❧

Marla S. Moore Named AOC Director

The Judicial Council of Georgia unanimously recommended Ms. Marla S.

Moore as director of the Administrative Office of the Courts at its July 22, 2009 meeting. Ms. Moore replaces Mr. David L. Ratley who retired July 31, 2009.



Ms. Marla S. Moore

Since 2006, Ms. Moore has served as a division director of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Twenty-five years of her career in state government were spent at the AOC, where she most recently served as Senior Associate Director of Court Services.

Ms. Moore has an undergraduate degree in history and a Masters in political science from Pittsburg State University in Kansas. She is a fellow of the Institute of Court Management. ❧

AOC Associate Director Earns ICM Certificate

On May 15, 2009, Mr. Christopher Patterson, Associate Director for

Court Services, became a Fellow and a Certified Court Executive of the Institute of Court Management



(ICM). Mr. Christopher Patterson

Upon completion of the requirements of ICM's Court Executive Development Program, Mr. Patterson, along with 21 other court professionals from around the United States, took part in graduation ceremonies conducted at the United States Supreme Court. Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., presided.

Mr. Patterson joined the Administrative Office of the Courts in 2005 as Assistant Director for Judicial Liaison. He was promoted to Associate Director for Courts Services in 2006. Prior to joining the AOC Mr. Patterson worked for the Fulton County Superior Court. ❧

Check out the new look of
www.georgiacourts.gov today!

Courts Respond to State Budget Woes

Supreme Court

On September 2, 2009, Chief Justice Carol W. Hunstein announced that all Supreme Court staff, including the seven justices, will take three furlough days before the end of the year. Other steps the high court has taken to reduce expenditures include closing its law library and consolidating office space. The court has eliminated two positions from the Reporter of Decisions.

Court of Appeals

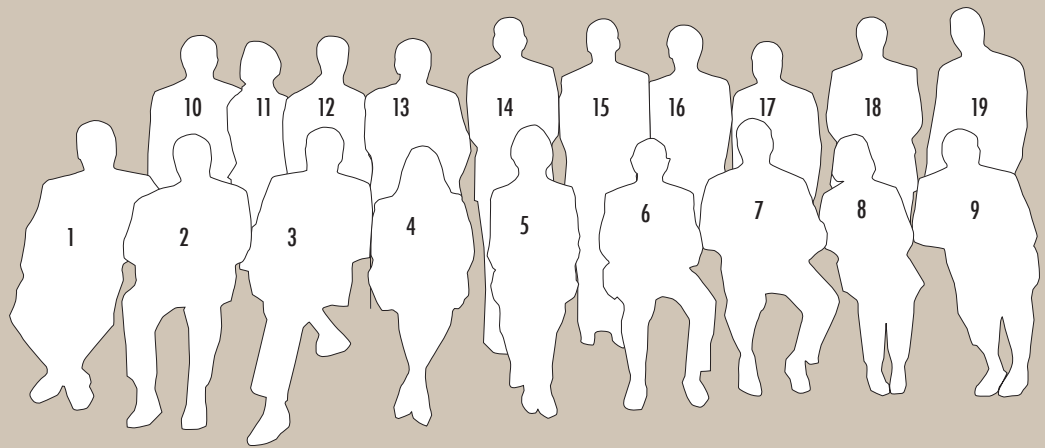
On August 26, 2009, Chief Judge M. Yvette Miller announced implementation of employee furloughs to offset budget reductions. The Office of the Clerk closed on the following days on September 4, October 9. Additional closures will be November 25 and December 31.

Superior Court

Judges in the Atlanta, Chattahoochee, and Gwinnett Judicial Circuits are voluntarily taking three furlough days before the end of the calendar year. Judges in the Rome Judicial Circuit have agreed to take one furlough day per month.

State Courts Respond to the Economic Crisis

The National Center for State Courts surveyed the 50 states and four US Territories regarding the extent of court budget reductions for FY09 and FY10. The survey found that courts in 27 states have had budgets reductions; courts in 12 additional states foresee future reductions. To review survey results, go to www.ncsconline.org/wc/budget/activities.asp ❧



Judicial Council of Georgia

1. Judge Michael Clark, Superior Court, Gwinnett Judicial Circuit; 2. Judge Stan Smith, Superior Court, Dublin Judicial Circuit; 3. Judge Bill Bass, State Court of Grady County; 4. Chief Judge M. Yvette Miller, Court of Appeals of Georgia; 5. Chief Justice Carol W. Hunstein, Supreme Court of Georgia; 6. Presiding Justice George H. Carley, Supreme Court of Georgia; 7. Judge John J. Ellington, Court of Appeals of Georgia; 8. Judge Kathlene Gosselin, Superior Court, Northeastern Judicial Circuit; 9. Judge Richard Alexander, Magistrate Court of Gwinnett County; 10. Judge Quillian Baldwin, Superior Court, Coweta Judicial Circuit; 11. Chief Judge Cynthia J. Becker, Superior Court, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit; 12. Judge David Emerson, Superior Court, Douglas Judicial Circuit; 13. Judge Ronnie Joe Lane, Superior Court, Pataula Judicial Circuit; 14. Judge Ron Ginsberg, State Court of Chatham County; 15. Judge David Strickland, Municipal Court of Covington; 16. Judge Lynwood Jordan, Probate Court of Forsyth County; 17. Judge Robert Rodatus, Juvenile Court, Gwinnett Judicial Circuit; 18. Judge F. Bryant Henry, Juvenile Court, Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit; 19. Judge Al Willis, Magistrate Court of Dooly County.

Not pictured: Chief Judge John D. Allen, Superior Court, Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit; Judge Tammy S. Brown, Probate Court of Barrow County; Chief Judge Doris Downs, Superior Court, Atlanta Judicial Circuit; Judge Charles Paul Rose, Superior Court, Atlantic Judicial Circuit; Judge Lawton Stephens; Judge Melvin K. Westmoreland, Superior Court, Atlanta Judicial Circuit.

Courthouse Spotlight



Murray County

County Seat: Chatsworth

Built: 1916-17

Judicial Circuit: Conasauga

Georgia
courts
Journal

Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, SW, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334